

BRYANT ELECTRIC COMPANY, BUILDING 24
80 Organ Street
Bridgeport
Fairfield County
Connecticut

HAER No. CT-155-A

HAER
CONN
1-BRIGPO,
5A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

National Park Service

Northeast Region

U.S. Custom House

200 Chestnut Street

Philadelphia, PA 19106

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HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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Location: 80 Organ Street, Bridgeport, Fairfield County, Connecticut

UTM Coordinates: USGS Bridgeport, Connecticut Quadrangle, Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates:

C	18.650184.4558915	E	18.650136.4558859
D	18.650190.4558867	B	18.650129.4558908

Date of Construction: 1923

Present Owners: Westinghouse Electric Corporation
Gateway Center
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Present Use: Vacant

Significance: The four story brick building originally housed finished part storage, packing and shipping departments. It occupies the center of the block east of Organ Street. Between 1960 and 1965 the third and fourth floors were modified to accommodate the plastics molding department. Building 24 was significant as a component of the Bryant plant. The building is an example of a general purpose warehouse, a portion of which was successively adapted for light manufacturing operations. Remnants of conveyors, hoppers and chutes show that considerable effort was placed on efficient material management and inventory storage. The building is significant as an example of a mid-twentieth century plastics manufacturing technology successfully adapted to the space and plan limitations of earlier factory architecture.

Project Information: The Connecticut Department of Economic Development has proposed to demolish historic industrial structures which are integral components of the Railroad Avenue Industrial National Register Historic District. The Connecticut Historical Commission concurred that it is not feasible to retain and adaptively reuse the Bryant Electric Company buildings. Recognizing the plant's historic significance, the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) requested, in a letter dated October 20, 1994, that the Department of Economic Development initiate and complete documentation of the historic structure to the professional standards of the National Park Service's Historic American Engineering Record as a mitigating measure prior to demolition of the complex. Copies are to be provided to the Bridgeport West End Industrial Revitalization Project.

Principal Investigators:
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Architectural Historian:
Steven Bedford

Industrial Historian:
Robert Stewart

Historical Perspectives
P.O. Box 3037
Westport, CT 06880

May, 1995

DESCRIPTION:

Building 24 is a 4 story T-shaped structure that repeats the architectural motif established by the main complex. The building features a large Warren truss-supported roof and a simple 4 bay loading dock on its northwestern elevation. It is joined to building 7 by a three story bridge that is faced in corrugated galvanized metal. The north face of the bridge formed the background for a large reproduction of the company logo. The bridge is illuminated by 5 bays of 6/6 windows. Building 24 and a portion of building 7 formed an integrated manufacturing and shipping complex for wiring devices.

HISTORY:

Starting around 1928, Bryant's Hemco Division made nearly all plastic parts used in fabricating wiring devices. When Hemco was sold off in the early 1960s, its employees and some machinery were relocated to building 24 and organized as a high volume injection molding department. The fourth floor was used for compounding thermosetting and thermoplastic formulations. Plastic compounds were dropped through flexible metal hoses to injection molding machines located on the third floor. The plastic parts were packaged and stored in 55 gallon fiber drums. Molded parts were shipped to an assembly plant in Puerto Rico or to assembly lines in building 7 across Organ Street. Finished inventory was stored and orders assembled in building 7. A conveyor belt on the second floor of the bridge carried components back to building 24 where they were packed and shipped to distributors.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION/BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bedford, Steven.

"Architectural Survey of the Bryant Electric Company Complex in Bridgeport, Connecticut." Westport, CT: Historical Perspectives, 1995. Photocopied.

Bryant Corporate Archives

Buildings of The Bryant Electric Company 1920 - Revised 1940

Fletcher-Thompson, Inc.

Site Plan Westinghouse/Bryant Division - 1968

Building 24 Plan

